

Mind Control Tapes Arrive

LV/CD In One!
Exclusive Lab Test

£2.00
37869
\$1.95

JANUARY 1985

The #1 Magazine of Home Video

Equipment, Tapes, Discs

YEAR'S
BEST

DB Satellites
Pies in the Sky?

Winter Shoots
Camera Tips



BERGER-BRAITHWAITE VIDEOTESTS
Pioneer LaserDisc/Compact Disc Player
Sharp VHS Hi-Fi VCR
Toshiba FST/RGB Monitor-Receiver
Epson Elm 2-Inch Color Monitor-Receiver



80



75



97

Features

High Tech, High Ticket

How super are the 'super systems'? Here's an irreverent but fact-filled answer.

By Norman Schreiber 68

Awards Special

The Best of 1984 72

Top Equipment

The hardest choosing came in the equipment department.

By Lancelot Braithwaite 74

Top Tapes

Our critic rates this year's bounty in terms of enjoyment.

By Mark Fleischmann 78

Top Discs

The cinema critic's verdict: discs come into their own.

By Harvey Elliott 82

The Dreggies

Technology takes some great steps sideways.

By Doug Garr 86

Snow Shoots

How to shoot your next picture show in the big chill.

By John Bishop 88

Pies in the Sky

He has seen the future, but it may not include DBS.

By William A. Marsano 92

Subliminal Suggestions

How you can use video mindbenders to alter undesirable behavior.

By Reina Meredith 96

Program Guide

News & Views

By Ken Winslow 45

Top 10

Tape & Disc Sales & Rentals 47

Reviews

Film & Video Clips 48

Directory

What's New on Tape & Disc 61

Videotests

Pioneer CLD-900 LV/CD Player

Sharp VC-489U VHS Hi-Fi VCR

Toshiba CZ2084 Monitor/Receiver

Epson ET-10 LCD Monitor/Receiver

By Berger-Braithwaite Labs 102



About the Cover. Scaling the peaks of agonizing choice, we bring you '84's best. Cover photo by Vittorio Sartor.

Columns

Channel One

Paying the Cable Bill 6

Fast Forward

Gentlemen's Agreement 8

Feedback

Videophiles' Guilt Complexity 10

New Products

Harmon/Kardon Launches 1st VCR.. 16

Fine Tuning

Motor Mess

By Roderick Woodcock 22

Videogram

Electronic Bull (Sales)

By Pat Wadsley 32

TV Den

And Then There Was 8

By Roderick Woodcock 34

Random Access

Word Processors

Garr/Forman/Puglia 38

New Channels

The Way We Are

By Tim Onosko 40

Dateline Tokyo

Shows and Tell

By Ichiro Kakehashi 158

Video Bookshelf

'Talking with Ingmar Bergman'

By George L. George 160

People

Crazy Guy, Quiet Lady

By Lorenzo Carcaterra 162

Off the Air

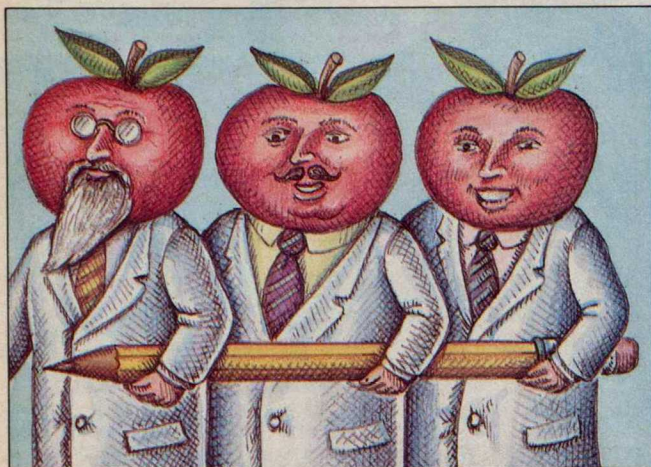
Ca-Bull

By Bob Brewin 164

Random Access

Personal Computers, News, and Games

Illustrations by Charles Waller



Word Processor: Three Generations

After computer games and spread sheets, word processing probably is the third most popular use of the micro-computer. Several dozen text editors are available, from the bestselling *WordStar* to the *Bank Street Writer* from Broderbund. The word on *WordStar* has always been that it's the "writer's writing program," replete with all kinds of features, including on-screen page formatting which allows you to see what your printer will do before you print. The problem with *WordStar*, however, has always been that it takes you a long time—a few weeks or more—to become fluent with it. *Bank Street Writer*, on the other hand, takes only 10 minutes of practice before you can effectively use it.

But these are only two editors, and by no means the only effective ones. People tend to stay with the word processor they've begun with, and I've stubbornly hung onto one during the past few years. Why? I don't have the stamina or inclination to learn another just for the sake of a few more features that are not likely to

greatly improve my efficiency. So I've been using *Apple Writer* in three different incarnations; version II, IIe, and recently the newly released 2.0.

The first version ran on the Apple II and II+ computers—and compared to today's standards, it was woefully cumbersome and primitive. Those computers did not have arrow keys to manipulate the cursor, so anytime you wanted to jump around the text to make deletions or additions, you had to hit the escape key twice. Even then you had to use the "IJKM" and "ESDX" keys to successfully negotiate your way in and out of paragraphs. Worse, upper case took two keystrokes per letter, including searching for the escape key with your left pinky—particularly annoying since every sentence contains at least one capital letter. Still, once you were accustomed to the idiosyncracies of *Apple Writer*, it was a far cry better than an IBM Correcting Selectric typewriter. Yet compared to my colleagues singing the virtues of *WordStar* and other editors, it was a dog.

When *Apple Writer IIe* came along, it was an up-

grade of the first version, designed especially to accommodate the "enhanced" computer, which does have arrow keys. This souped-up program speeded up the writing process mostly because the keyboard was now always in the edit mode. And the shift key became active, allowing you to type capitals the same way you do on ordinary typewriters. With the enhanced *Apple Writer* I became a reasonably happy devotee, despite some drawbacks. While I couldn't get on-screen page breaks (like *WordStar*), I could still get an advance look at the text on screen before printing it. Thanks to a 1K buffer, paragraph manipulation—an absolute necessity for writers—was as good as on any word processor I'd seen, enabling me to move most medium-sized chunks of copy around with only three keystrokes.

Then came version 2.0, which purportedly would enhance even the enhanced program. I've been writing with it for about three weeks, including this review—but despite several enviable improvements the package is disappointing. It loads faster than any of its *Apple Writer* predecessors, but provides 5K less usable RAM. Then again, when using print-format commands, for the first time in the series you get a fairly good idea of what your document will look like in hard copy. It's not *WordStar* (because there are no page breaks), but it's adequate.

The downside of 2.0, however, is in file management, and here is where the new editor is extremely disagreeable. Apple has become infatuated with a new disk operating system called *ProDOS*, and 2.0 uses it. While

Apple disk drives still run both *ProDOS* and the old *DOS 3.0*, any formatted 3.0 disk will not run with 2.0. This is something like getting a new LaserVision player that doesn't run any of your collection of discs.

Worst of all, *ProDOS* insists that you give your disks volume names in addition to a subtitle for each file, using slashes. This means unnecessary delays when saving text to disk. In short, the new *Apple Writer* demands that you do more fingerwork when transferring words from screen to disk and vice versa. If you've missed the first two versions of this program and begin word processing with 2.0 on an Apple IIc, chances are you won't be bothered by these petty annoyances. But if you're looking to upgrade, you will. I'll take *Apple Writer IIe* any day.

—Doug Garr



Worms?

Electronic Arts/Atari, C-64/
Disk

You have to be suspicious of any program in which the first instruction is to not read the instruction manual. Perhaps Electronic Arts was hoping that users of this purported "game" won't realize that the rules and the program have about as much in common as sushi and a knish.

According to the rules, *Worms*? is about training new, wild, auto, and untrained worms to capture territories on a dotted grid. If a worm moves into a trail already laid by another creature, it dies. The worm that captures all six territories attached to a dot—or else the last worm left alive—is the winner.

What the program really does is another story. For one, the user's worms are trained before the start of the game, meaning that players sit and move their joystick in all directions not having the slightest idea of how this might affect the worm. When the program is activated, simple colored lines (these must be the worms, right?) squiggle all over the screen, knocking each other off until one color is declared the victor. A normal response would be, "OK, now what?" Well, that's it.

One supposes users are expected to sit and train worms all day, eventually learning how the joystick affects the worms' later movements on the screen. But there is no incentive to continue once you've used this "game" more than once. Avoid this one.

—Tracie Forman

PictureIt On the VideoShow

Although software manufacturers have been exploiting the field of presentation graphics recently, most of their programs are limited in that they can display only up to 16 colors in any given picture. To the average user that may seem a lot—until he sees a graph produced by

PictureIt and displayed through VideoShow. *PictureIt* enables you to design a variety of graphs with up to 1000 colors each, which can then be displayed through the 16-pound portable VideoShow.

The technology that makes this possible addresses microdots rather than pixels, thus providing over three times the resolution of other graphic systems.

You create the graphs and charts with *PictureIt* and a compatible PC by coding in the various color information and saving the resulting slides to disk. The VideoShow—which has its own 8086 processor, 16K of ROM, and 256K of RAM—decodes the information and provides the actual colors. The slides can then be displayed on any TV, color monitor, or video projector; they can even be saved to videotape with voiceover if you choose. The show can be run automatically or using a remote-control keypad device.

Both software and hardware are easy to use and the documentation, though thin, is more than adequate. The manufacturer, General Parametrics, intends to release additional software (such as a drawing program) soon. *PictureIt* costs \$595 and the VideoShow runs \$3499.

—Vincent Puglia

Hackers: Heroes Of the Computer Revolution

By Steven Levy (*Anchor Press/Doubleday*, \$17.95)

This fairly exhaustive account of those technological adventurers affectionately called "hackers" provides a

BEST SELLERS/ HOME

1. **Dollars & Sense.** TIP, MAC, APc, IBM, AP. Monogram.
2. **Print Shop.** AP. Broderbund.
3. **Bank Street Writer.** AP, IBM, C64, AT, APc. Broderbund.
4. **Mac the Knife.** MAC. Miles Computing.
5. **Your Pers. Net Worth.** AP, C64, AT, IBM, PCjr. Scarborough.
6. **Managing Your Money.** IBM. Micro Education (MECA).
7. **Home Acct.** APc, TIP, EPS, AT, C64, IBM, TRS, AP. Arrays/Cont.
8. **Homeword.** C64, AP, AT, IBM, TIP. Sierra On-Line.
9. **ClickArt.** MAC. T/Maker.
10. **Micro Cookbook.** APc, IBM, AP, APc. Virtual Combinatics.

BEST SELLERS/ RECREATION

1. **Flight Simulator II.** AT, C64, AP. Sublogic.
2. **Sargon III.** AP, C64, IBM, MAC. Hayden Software.
3. **Flight Simulator.** IBM. Microsoft.
4. **Zork I.** CP/M, AP, DEC, IBM, AT, MAC, TIP. Infocom.
5. **Ultima III.** AP, AT, IBM, C64. Origin Systems.
6. **Summer Games.** AP, C64, AT. Epyx.
7. **Millionaire.** MAC, AP, C64, IBM, AT. Bluechip Software.
8. **Trivia Fever.** C64, AP, IBM. Professional Software.
9. **Zork III.** IBM, TRS, MAC, AT, CP/M, TIP, C64. Infocom.
10. **Zork II.** TRS, DEC, IBM, AP, AT, CP/M, TIP, MAC. Infocom.

LEGEND: AP = Apple, APc = Apple IIc, APe = Apple IIe, AT = Atari, C64 = Commodore 64, COM = Commodore Pet/CBM, CP/M = 5¼" and 8" formats, DEC = DEC Rainbow, EPS = Epson QX-10, IBM = IBM-PC, MAC = Apple Macintosh, PCjr = IBM PCjr, RIP = Texas Instruments Professional, TRS = TRS-80, VIC = Commodore Vic-20, VTR = Victor 9000, WNG = Wang Personal Computer, ZEN = Zenith 100.

©1984 Softsel® Computer Products, Inc.

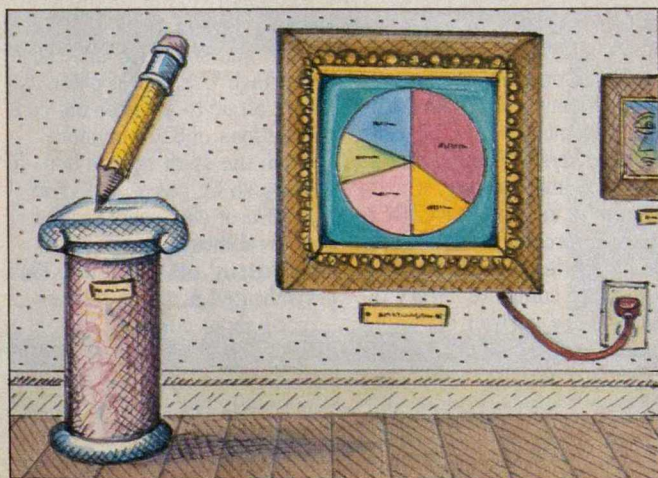
wonderful glimpse of the guys who stayed up all night to make computer software safe for the rest of the world. Author Levy is fascinated by man's mental swordplay with the microchip. He traces its history beginning with the MIT wizards who had affairs with mainframe computers in the '60s, takes us to Stanford and the next generation, and finally waltzes us through the modern era of game software design for micros.

The single thread woven through the narrative is the Hacker Ethic. For convenience, one could say it means exploring a system (even illegally, but always benevolently) to find out how it works, and making the information available to the public—*gratis*. This ethic was skewed, however, when it meant computer games. Money changes everything, and the Big Money in software sullied the ethic. (Even the infamous phone phreak Cap'n Crunch drives a Mercedes.)

In the last and best part of the book Levy uses Sierra On-Line, a software house, as a microcosm of the American Computer Dream and the price one pays to achieve it. Readers who are also computer buffs will find some familiar names among the portraits of characters: Bill Gates, Steve Wozniak, Richard Garriott. Levy has done a first-rate job illuminating the cast. Yes, they are interesting people, infinitely more so than the computers with which they spend so much time. Knowing the MIT crowd was into esoteric Chinese food helps explain a highly creative and unusual persona.

By far, *Hackers* is easily the most important work in its genre (though it's not a computer book) since Tracy Kidder's critically acclaimed *The Soul of a New Machine*. (I should add, too, that my enthusiasm for the book may be clouded or inflated by a close friendship with the author. But I hope it hasn't.)

—Doug Garr



TAKE ANY 2 FOR \$4.95 EACH

when you join the Columbia Software Club and agree to buy 4 selections at regular Club prices in the next 2 years



Super Software Savings for
• Apple®
• Atari® Computers
• Commodore 64™
• ColecoVision®/Adam™
 Selections available on cartridge or disk as indicated



0040022
Addition/Subtraction
0041012
Multiplication/Division
 Both available for C-64, Atari H.C. and Apple: disk.



8035022
Zaxxon
 ColecoVision/Adam, C-64: cart; Atari H.C.: disk and cart; Apple: disk.



8111092
Star Trek
 ColecoVision/Adam, C-64, Atari H.C.: cart; Apple: disk.



8172052
Master Type
 C-64, Atari H.C.: disk and cart; Apple: disk.



8122062
Pitfall II
 ColecoVision/Adam, Atari H.C.: cart; C-64: disk and cart.



8100022
Choplifter
 C-64, Atari H.C.: disk and cart; Apple: disk.



8159022
Smurf
 ColecoVision/Adam: cart.



8123052
Bruce Lee
 C-64, Atari H.C. and Apple: disk.



8216032
Seastalker
 C-64, Atari H.C. and Apple: disk.



8101012
Lode Runner
 C-64, Atari H.C.: disk and cart; Apple: disk.



8090042
River Raid
 ColecoVision/Adam, Atari H.C.: cart; C-64: disk and cart.



8120082
Frenzy
 ColecoVision/Adam: cart.



8124042
Cabbage Patch Kids
 ColecoVision/Adam: cart.



8150012
Summer Games
 C-64, Atari H.C. and Apple: disk.



8149052
WarGames
 ColecoVision/Adam: cart.



8102002
Temple of Apshai
 C-64, Atari H.C. and Apple: disk.



8215042
Beach-Head
 C-64, Atari H.C.: disk.



8103092
Pitstop
 C-64, Atari H.C.: cart.



8229082
Pitstop II
 C-64, Atari H.C. and Apple: disk.

Here's a great selection of sensational software for every member of the family—at super savings! You've seen these software selections in stores anywhere from \$19.95 and up—yet, now, you can have any two for the fantastic low price of only \$4.95 each! That's our way of introducing you to the Columbia Software Club—a brand-new service that delivers the best software for Atari® Home Computers, Apple®, Commodore 64™ Adam™ and ColecoVision® systems...right to your home, and at great savings!

How the Club works: about every 6 weeks (up to 9 times a year) you will receive the Columbia Software Club Magazine. In it you'll find out about an exciting variety of the newest software available: simple shoot-em-up adventures, more challenging strategy software, learning software to help the entire family acquire new skills—how to type, master basic math, budget your finances, and much more.

In addition, each issue of the magazine announces the "Pick-Hit Selection"—an outstanding software selection specifically for your system. If you want only this Selection, you need do nothing—it will be sent to you automatically. If you want one of the alternate selections—or

nothing at all—just tell us so on the response card always provided, and mail it by the date indicated. You'll always have ten days to make your decision. If you ever receive a selection without having had ten days to decide, you may return it at our expense.

The selections you order will be mailed and billed at regular Club prices—which currently begin at \$24.95 and are less than list prices! (A shipping/handling charge and applicable sales tax is added.) Remember, you don't have to buy a selection every time you hear from us—your only membership obligation is to purchase four selections, at regular Club prices, in the coming two years. And you may cancel membership at any time after doing so. If you decide to continue, you'll be eligible for our generous money-saving bonus plan.

10-Day Free Trial: We'll send you complete details of the Club's operation with your introductory selections. If you are not satisfied for any reason whatsoever, just return everything within 10 days for a full refund and you will have no further obligation. So act now!

All applications subject to review, and the Columbia Software Club reserves the right to reject any application or cancel any membership.

COLUMBIA SOFTWARE CLUB, Dept 2RB
 3000 North 35th Street, Terre Haute, Indiana 47811

102

Please accept my application under the terms outlined in this advertisement—and send me the 2 selections indicated below, for which I am enclosing check or money order for \$9.90 (that's \$4.95 for each selection). I agree to buy 4 more selections at regular Club prices in the next 2 years.

Write in numbers of the 2 selections you want

Send my selections for the following system (check one system only):

☐ ATARI® HOME COMPUTERS 2 COMMODORE 64™ 4
☐ APPLE® 3 ☐ COLECOVISION® & ADAM™ 5 (cartridges only)

If you have selected Atari Home Computer or Commodore 64 software—be sure to check the type of format you prefer (check one format only):

☐ CARTRIDGE A ☐ DISK H

Name (please print) First Name Initial Last Name

Address Apt.

City/State Zip

Do you have a telephone? (check one) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Parent's Signature if under 18

Offer not available: APO, FPO, Alaska, Canada, Hawaii, Puerto Rico
WANT THIS CHARGED TO YOUR CREDIT CARD? Fill in information below, we'll charge the \$9.90 and future shipments to your credit card—and credit your account with any returns.

☐ American Express ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard Interbank No.

Credit Card No. in full Expiration date

Signature

103

ATARI® is a registered trademark of Atari, Inc.—APPLE® is a registered trademark of Apple Computer, Inc.—ColecoVision® and Adam™ are trademarks of Coleco Industries, Inc.—COMMODORE 64™ is a trademark of Commodore Electronics, Ltd.—BRUCE LEE™ is a trademark of Linda Lee—CABBAGE PATCH KIDS™ is a trademark of and licensed from Original Appalachian Artworks, Inc.—FRENZY™ is a trademark of Stern Electronics, Inc.—SMURF™ © 1984 Peyo. Authorized by Wallace Berne Licensing. Woodland Hills, CA—STAR TREK™ is a trademark of Paramount Pictures Corporation—ZAXXON™ is a trademark of Sega Enterprises, Inc.